

Claim 1 recites a razor comprising a blade unit carrying structure (2) on which a blade unit (1) is permanently or detachably mounted for pivotal movement relative to the blade unit carrying structure (2) about a predetermined pivot axis (14) extending longitudinally through the blade unit (1). Claim 1 also recites a delivery system for conducting a fluid dispensed from a reservoir connected to the blade unit carrying structure to at least one discharge port (45), wherein the discharge port (45) has an opening located at or close to the predetermined pivot axis for discharging the fluid to the blade unit (1) at a guard surface (6) at or near the predetermined pivot axis. The discharge port (45) and guard surface (6) are shown in Figure 4.

In the Official Action, Claims 1-7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 as anticipated by Schauble 4,809,432. Regarding the limitations of Claim 4 (now recited in Claim 1), the Examiner asserted that in Schauble the discharge port is disposed to deliver fluid at a guard surface of the blade unit (Fig. 3) and that the discharge port has an opening located at or close to the predetermined pivot axis (Figs. 7 and 8). Presumably, the Examiner's assertions are based on the showing in Figure 3 of channels 48, 50, 52 and 54 which distribute emollient to the edge 58 of the razor blade 42 (column 3, lines 44-47) and the showing in Figures 7-8 of an infeed passageway 238 which cooperates with an outflow orifice 226 to receive the emollient from the reservoir. However, applicant notes that the Schauble device does not satisfy the limitation of a discharge port opening which is located at or close to the predetermined pivot axis for discharging the fluid to the blade unit "at a guard surface at or near the predetermined pivot axis". In the Schauble device, discharge of the emollient occurs at the ends of channels 48, 50, 52 and 54 which are located near the edge of the razor blade 242 (Figures 7-9) at a position remote from the pivot axis of the razor head 214. Exactly the opposite is recited in Claim 1 which requires the discharge port opening to be located at or close to the predetermined pivot axis for discharging the fluid to the blade unit at a guard surface at or near the predetermined pivot axis. Accordingly, applicant believes that

Claim 1 is patentable over the Schauble disclosure and requests the §102 rejection to be withdrawn.

Regarding dependent Claim 2, the Examiner asserted that passageway 238 of Schauble satisfies the limitation that the discharge port opening (45) is defined by a part (44) which remains stationary with respect to the blade unit carrying structure (2) during pivotal movement of the blade unit (1) about the predetermined axis. Applicants believe that the Examiner position is in error because exactly the opposite is the case in Schauble. The passageway 238, which according to the Examiner corresponds to the stationary part, actually travels relative to the handle 212 (blade unit carrying structure) as the razor head 214 (blade unit) pivots about the hinge 223. In contrast to the requirements of Claim 1, the passageway 238 does not remain stationary with respect to the handle 212 (blade unit carrying structure) during pivotal movement of the razor head 214 (blade unit). In view of this distinction, applicant believes that Claim 2 is not anticipated by the Schauble disclosure and requests the §102 rejection to be withdrawn.

Similarly, the requirements of dependent Claim 3 are not satisfied by the Schauble disclosure. Claim 3 is directed to the embodiment of Figures 4-5 in which the stationary part (44) is not mechanically coupled directly to the blade unit (1) as specified in the claim. In the Schauble disclosure, just the opposite is the case. The passageway 238 (stationary part) is mechanically coupled directly to the razor head 214 (blade unit) because the passageway 238 is an integral part of the structure of the razor head 214. Accordingly, applicant believes that Claim 3 is not anticipated by the Schauble disclosure and requests the §102 rejection to be withdrawn.

In the Official Action, Claim 8 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Schauble in view of Apprille 5,249,361. According to the Examiner, it would have been obvious to provide Schauble with an elastomeric skin contacting element to allow for a smoother shave. However, the Examiner's analysis ignores the requirement of Claim 8 that the elastomeric element has "a lip surrounding and

sealing against the tubular member adjacent to the discharge port." The lip appears as item 56 which surrounds delivery tube 44 in Figure 8. No such lip is disclosed by the cited references. Accordingly, applicant requests that the §103 rejection of Claim 8 be withdrawn.

Claim 11 recites a razor comprising a blade unit carrying structure (2) on which a blade unit (1) is permanently or detachably mounted for pivotal movement relative to the blade unit carrying structure (2) about a predetermined pivot axis extending longitudinally through the blade unit (1) and wherein an opposite end of the blade unit carrying structure (2) is hingedly connected to a supporting structure (3). Claim 11 also recites a delivery system for conducting a fluid dispensed from a reservoir, the delivery system including a valve for controlling supply of fluid to the blade unit, the blade unit carrying structure being coupled to the valve for the valve to be actuated by displacement of the blade unit carrying structure relative to the supporting structure caused by pressing the blade unit against the skin during shaving, and the blade unit carrying structure being resiliently biased to close the valve when the blade unit is lifted clear of the skin.

Further, Claim 11 as amended includes the limitation from Claim 14 which provides that the blade unit carrying structure (2) and the supporting structure (3) are integrally connected by at least one flexible web (36) which defines a second pivot axis about which the blade carrying structure (2) is pivotable relative to the supporting structure (3). The flexible web 36 is shown in Figure 4. Claim 12 as amended includes the same limitation from Claim 14.

In the Official Action, Claims 9-15 and 18-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C §103(a) as obvious over Schauble in view of Hackmyer 3,726,009. The Examiner asserted that the above limitation from Claim 14 (now in Claims 11 and 12) was satisfied by Hackmyer which (according to the Examiner) discloses a blade unit carrying structure that is hingedly coupled by a web (21c) to the supporting structure for the valve to be actuated when the blade is pressed against the skin. However,

in contrast to the Examiner's assertion, applicant notes that Hackmyer describes item 21c as a "prominence". Nothing in the Hackmyer disclosure suggests that item 21c is a flexible web which defines a second pivot axis about which the blade carrying structure is pivotable relative to the supporting structure. Accordingly, it appears that Hackmyer cannot be combined with Schauble to satisfy the limitations of Claims 11 and 12. Accordingly, applicant requests the §103 rejection to be withdrawn.

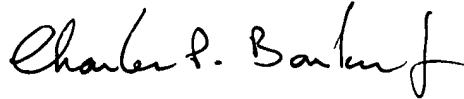
Claims 23 and 24, which are dependent on Claims 11 and 12, specify that the blade unit is supported by the blade unit carrying structure with its longitudinal axis substantially parallel to the second pivot axis defined by the web. This feature of the invention is disclosed at page 8, lines 1-3 of the specification. Since this feature is not disclosed or suggested by Schauble and Hackmyer, applicants believe that Claims 23 and 24 define patentable subject matter over the cited references.

In Claim 22 applicant has inserted the term "flanged" in place of the term "flange-like". Applicant believes that this amendment avoids the objection raised by the Examiner and requests the §112 rejection to be withdrawn.

In the Official Action, Claims 16 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Schauble and Hackmyer in view of Miyauchi 3,417,468. Applicant notes that Miyauchi does not disclose the claimed features of amended Claim 1 discussed above. Accordingly, applicant believes that Claims 16 and 17 define patentable subject matter over the cited references.

For the foregoing reasons, applicant submits that Claims 1-3, 5-13 and 15-24 define patentable subject matter and requests allowance of the claims in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Charles P. Boukus, Jr.", written in dark ink.

Charles P. Boukus, Jr.
Registration No. 24,754
Attorney for Applicant
2001 Jefferson Davis Highway
Suite 202
Arlington, Virginia 22202
(703) 415-2620

May 2, 2003